ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

ABBAphonic

CONDUCTED AND ARRANGED BY MATTHEW FREEMAN
VOCALISTS: MARY CAREWE AND RIA JONES

1 GIMME! GIMME! GIMME! (A MAN AFTER MIDNIGHT) 4:31
2 CHIQUITITA 4:52
3 DANCING QUEEN 3:54
4 SUPER TROUPER 4:14
5 THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL 4:58
6 TAKE A CHANCE ON ME 4:23
7 MONEY, MONEY, MONEY 3:11
8 MAMMA MIA 3:36
9 INTERMEZZO 3:36
10 KNOWING ME, KNOWING YOU 3:52
11 SOS 3:30
12 VOULEZ-VOUS 3:55
13 I HAVE A DREAM 4:08
14 FERNANDO 4:12
15 WATERLOO 2:50
16 THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC 4:08
17 DANCING QUEEN *REMIX* 3:35

www.rpo.co.uk

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

RPO SP 029

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
ABBAphonic
ABBA's Greatest Hit Songs With An Orchestral Twist!
CONDUCTOR: MATTHEW FREEMAN VOCALISTS: MARY CAREWE AND RIA JONES
Includes: MAMMA MIA • I HAVE A DREAM • DANCING QUEEN • WATERLOO
MONEY, MONEY, MONEY • TAKE A CHANCE ON ME and many more!

ABBA

Although they did not release their first single until 1972, the story of ABBA began back in the mid-1960s when Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson met for the first time. The two men were members of popular Swedish folk and pop groups, writing their first song together in 1966 and by the end of the 1960s had established themselves as a regular partnership. In 1969 Björn and Benny met Agnetha Fältskog and Anni-Frid Lyngstad (known as Frida), both successful solo recording artists, who would later become both the other half of ABBA as well as their fiancées.

At first the quartet worked together by contributing songs, vocals or melodies on tracks that each individual singer happened to be working on at the time, and by 1970 established their first venture together as cabaret act Festfolk. This was not a success, but in 1972 they recorded the song *People Need Love* which gained a reasonable following in their native Sweden.

At this time the group still went under the name 'Björn and Benny, Agnetha and Anni-Frid', and it was in this incarnation that they entered their first Eurovision Song Contest in 1973 with the song *Ring Ring*, which, despite not winning the contest, became a hit in a number of European countries and was the title track of their first album. The following year they had changed their name to ABBA (the members' initials, with permission from a Swedish fish company of the same name!) and entered Eurovision again with *Waterloo*. The rest, as they say, is history, the track winning the contest and reaching Number One in record charts all over Europe, even making the US Top Ten.

Including 1973's *Ring Ring*, ABBA released a total of eight studio albums, with one nearly every year until 1981's *The Visitors*, not including additional 'Greatest Hits' compilation albums. The group gained particular popularity in the UK and Australia, occupying the Number One spots in these countries nine and six times respectively. Their only US Number One was *Dancing Queen* in 1977.

By the early 1980s the group began to lose focus, with each member concentrating on other projects – Björn and Benny planning the musical *Chess* and the girls looking to reignite their solo careers – and in 1982 announced their plans to take a break. Despite no signs of a reunion, the group have continued to enjoy massive popularity with films, numerous tribute acts, exhibitions and 'Greatest Hits' albums, the most popular arguably being *ABBA Gold*, which to date has sold over 26 million copies. In 1999 the phenomenally successful musical *Mamma Mia!* premièred in London's West End and since then, along with the Broadway version that opened in 2001, has been seen by over 30 million people worldwide and led to the hugely popular 2008 film starring Meryl Streep. ABBA's popularity shows no signs of receding, with an ABBA museum planned for Stockholm and continuing tribute shows and albums, not least including this one!

RIA JONES

VOCALIST

Ria Jones is originally from Swansea in Wales. Most recently she appeared in *Closer Than Ever* at the Landor Theatre, after playing Alexandra Spoffard in the UK tour of *The Witches Of Eastwick* and Mrs Overall in the UK tour of *Acorn Antiques: The Musical*, written and directed by Victoria Wood. Her West End theatre credits include Liz Imbrie in *High Society* (Shaftesbury Theatre and national tour); Necrophorous and Carla in *Nine* (Donmar Warehouse), Svetlana and Florence in *Chess* (Prince Edward Theatre), Fantine in *Les Misérables* (London and national tour), Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (London and national tour) and Grizabella in *Cats* (New London Theatre, Oslo and Helsinki). Additional theatre credits include Eva Perón in *Evita* (Manchester Opera House), Josephine and Monica in *Romance Romance* (Bridewell Theatre), Kim in *Personals* (New End Theatre), Petra in *A Little Night Music* (Leicester Haymarket), Emma West in *A Twist of Fate* (Jubilee Theatre, Singapore), Ida Down in *Honk!* (Victoria Theatre, Singapore), Norma Desmond in *Sunset Boulevard* (Sydmonton Festival), Victor Victoria in *Victor Victoria* (Bridewell Theatre) and Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes* (national tour), where she was nominated for the TMA Award for Best Performance in a Musical.

Television and film credits include *When Eric Met Ernie* (BBC), *Welsh in the West End* for BBC Wales, *For One Night Only With Ria Jones* (also BBC Wales), soloist at three Royal Variety Shows (BBC 1), *A Night Under The Stars With Bryn Terfel* (BBC Wales) and *Showstoppers* (BBC 1).

Concert credits include Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Barbican), Eva Perón in *Evita* (Highlands Park, Chelmsford), Anita in *West Side Story* (Copenhagen), Fantine in *Les Misérables* (Cardiff Castle), soloist in *Sondheim - A Celebration* (St David's Hall, Cardiff), soloist in *The Music Of Andrew Lloyd Webber* (Prince Edward Theatre), soloist in *Voices of a Nation* (Opening of Welsh Assembly, Cardiff Bay), soloist in *Best of Broadway* (Royal Albert Hall) and soloist in *Children Will Listen* (Theatre Royal Drury Lane).

Ria Jones' recording credits include Malica in the brand new musical adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty* by Trisha Ward, Kim in *Personals*, Emma West in *A Twist of Fate*, live cast recording of *A Tribute to Hal Prince* and guest soloist in *My Way* with Pier Nelson (platinum album).

Radio credits include performances as a soloist on *Friday Night is Music Night* (BBC Radio 2) and *Magic of the Musicals* (BBC Wales).

Mary Carewe is one of the UK's most accomplished and versatile concert and recording artists and is equally comfortable singing musical theatre showstoppers and cabaret songs as she is performing contemporary classical music. Her ability to interpret a composer's wishes and make the music her own means she is also in great demand in the studio for film, television and radio work.

Mary Carewe first came to international recognition through the *Adiemus* projects with Karl Jenkins – the mixture of classical orchestra and multi-tracked female chanting becoming an instant hit. Mary has continued to work with him regularly and features on his 2009 Christmas CD for EMI *Stella Natalis*. Mary Carewe's solo recordings include collections of West End, Broadway and film music for Chandos, Silva Screen and Warner Classics as well as a library of popular songs for Readers Digest (available on iTunes). She has recorded music by Thomas Adès for EMI, Britten for NMC, Peter Maxwell-Davies (*Resurrection*) for Collins Classics and her own collection of 'serious cabaret' repertoire - *The Truth about Love* - for ASV. With the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra she features on *The Best of Bond* - songs from the iconic James Bond movies - and collections of musical theatre songs and Christmas favourites.

On British television her voice is recognisable on many jingles including Autoglass and McCain's oven chips and she has also sung television theme tunes such as *French and Saunders* and *The Wartime Kitchen and Garden*. Her movie credits include cameos for *Mona Lisa Smile*, *Alfie* and *The Sleeping Dictionary*.

As a concert artist Mary Carewe has performed under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle, Kurt Masur, John Rutter, John Wilson and Charles Hazlewood and she is a regular guest of orchestras around Europe, Australia, Asia and the USA. She has a long established artistic relationship with Carl Davis and made her Carnegie Hall début with him and the New York Pops Orchestra in March 2009. In the UK she has sung with all of the country's leading orchestras including The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with whom she has made numerous appearances at Cadogan Hall and the Royal Albert Hall in London.

As a recitalist, Mary Carewe has performed at such prestigious venues and festivals as the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Aldeburgh Festival, Festival de l'Ile de France, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Opera Butxaca in Barcelona, Cheltenham Festival, Berlin Philharmonie and the Maison de Radio-France in Paris. On stage she has appeared in revues of Sondheim, Cole Porter and Rodgers and Hart as well as playing Anna I in Kurt Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins*.

Mary Carewe was born into a very musical family but feels she was taught to sing by Agnetha and Frida as she was an avid ABBA fan as a child! She is thrilled to be involved with ABBAphonic.

MARY CAREWE

VOCALIST

Platinum and gold disc award-winning arranger, conductor and pianist Matthew Freeman enjoys a diverse international career. His association with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) began with the album *Symphonic Rock* which has subsequently been performed annually at the Royal Albert Hall. Additional orchestrations include film music for *Gladiator* and *Die Another Day*. In 2010 he conducted the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in the presence of HRH Prince Charles celebrating 25 years of the Prince's charity Business In The Community at the Royal Albert Hall.

Matthew Freeman is co-creator of the Olivier Award-nominated musical *Rat Pack Live From Las Vegas* which continues to play in the USA, Canada and across Europe. From its London West End début at the Haymarket Theatre it has gone on to play long runs at the Adelphi, Novello and Savoy theatres and the London Palladium. Matthew Freeman also supervised the recording of the DVD and has conducted the *Rat Pack* with the London Symphony Orchestra at Blenheim Palace and the Barbican.

Conducting over fifty albums with the BBC Concert Orchestra, Danish Radio Orchestra, Sønderjyllands Symfoniorkester, Prague Symphony Orchestra, Metropole Orchestra of Amsterdam and the NRK Oslo Orchestra has led to the orchestration of music for, amongst others, Larry Adler, Shirley Bassey, Vic Damone, Ken Dodd, Ruthie Henshall, Howard Keel, Millicent Martin, David Soul, Lorna Luft (creating a duet with Judy Garland) and Roger Whittaker. Matthew Freeman was invited to arrange and conduct Decca's celebration of the HM Queen Mother's 100th birthday. He has been personal musical director for Shirley Bassey, Michael Crawford, Anthony Newley, Frankie Vaughan and for Mary O'Hara at Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House and for her 16-part television series with the City of London Sinfonia.

In 2007 Matthew Freeman conducted the opening performance at the new Kilworth House Theatre in Leicestershire. This was an entirely new venture initiated by the owners of Kilworth House which led in 2008 to the creation of *The Opera Show* with its unique and fresh approach to presenting the great operatic arias.

The Opera Show went on to tour the USA, Scandinavia, Spain, Portugal and finally Milan to great critical acclaim.

Matthew Freeman's first venture into the world of ABBA was to conduct and arrange *ABBA The Show*. This production recreates the sound of ABBA with original ABBA band members and the National Symphony Orchestra. It has played in 34 countries and at Wembley Arena on two occasions following in the footsteps of the original ABBA.

Matthew Freeman was musical supervisor for the 2004 Olivier Awards and has conducted Shirley Bassey at the Royal Variety Performance. For Sir Peter Hall's production of *Amadeus* at London's Old Vic Theatre he created and performed the fortepiano music. Credits in the film world include vocal coaching Drew Barrymore, Elizabeth Shue and Keanu Reeves.

MATTHEW FREEMAN

CONDUCTOR AND ARRANGER

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The story of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) is colourful and dramatic with a reputation worldwide for music-making of the highest quality.

In 1946 Sir Thomas Beecham set out to create a world-class ensemble from the finest musicians in the country. Beecham envisioned an orchestra that would bring the greatest music to audiences across the world and, to this day, Beecham's legacy lives on.

Over the years, the RPO has become a byword for exceptional quality and versatility, undertaking a diverse range of activities from traditional performances in concert halls to classical spectaculars and 'cross-over' concerts in pop arenas.

The Orchestra is London-based and performs regularly at the Royal Albert Hall and Cadogan Hall. It uses its schedule in the capital as a springboard for a comprehensive regional touring programme. Internationally, the Orchestra undertakes a busy schedule with regular performances in Europe and tours to the USA, China and Azerbaijan.

The RPO has also enjoyed a long partnership with the major record labels, recording with some of the most well-known artists of our day. The Orchestra also has its own record label and currently has twenty-three discs in its popular *Here Come The Classics™* series. These recordings reflect the diversity of the RPO's programming and include popular orchestral, choral and operatic repertoire, Viennese and film classics.

The Orchestra's forthcoming concerts include a great choice of world-renowned artists and a wide variety of repertoire, ranging from Holst's *The Planets Suite* and Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto to *Symphonic Rock, ABBAphonic* and *Film Music Gala*. The RPO also performs the live concert *Best of Broadway* at the Royal Albert Hall annually, with special guests from the world of West End and Broadway musicals.

To find out more about the RPO's live musical theatre performances and recordings, please visit our website: **www.rpo.co.uk**

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

All arrangements by Matthew Freeman

All words/music by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus (and Stig Anderson for Knowing Me, Knowing You, Mamma Mia, SOS, Waterloo, Fernando)

Copyright for all songs held by Union Songs AB, Sweden (worldwide) and Bocu Music Ltd (UK + Eire) except for Chiquitita – Music for UNICEF/Chappell